Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-10 (Canceled).

11. (Currently amended) A hybrid riser configuration having a submerged tower comprising a plurality of riser pipes substantially inserted in guide conduits, and also having buoyancy means ~~and tethering tension~~ acting as tower tensioning means, the riser pipes and guide conduits being connected to a base anchored to the ocean floor, wherein a plurality of the guide conduits are acting as multiple tethers, each guide conduit further acting as a radial constraint in elastic spiral deformation of the riser pipe inside, wherein during tow-out and installation, the guide conduits provide necessary buoyancy to make the riser configuration, except the base and buoyancy means, nearly neutrally buoyant.

12. (Previously presented) A hybrid riser configuration according to claim 11, wherein the riser pipes and guide conduits are rigidly connected both to the base and the buoyancy means of the riser configuration.

13. (Previously presented) A hybrid riser configuration according to claim 11, wherein the material of the guide conduits comprises aluminium or a similar light metal.

14. (Previously presented) A hybrid riser configuration according to claim 11, wherein the riser configuration is protected by sacrificial anodes.

Claim 15 (Canceled).

16. (Previously presented) A hybrid riser configuration according to claim 12, wherein the material of the guide conduits comprises aluminium or a similar light metal.

17. (Previously presented) A hybrid riser configuration according to claim 12, wherein the riser configuration is protected by sacrificial anodes.

18. (Previously presented) A hybrid riser configuration according to claim 12, wherein during tow-out and installation, the guide conduits provide necessary buoyancy to make the riser configuration, except the base and buoyancy means, near neutrally buoyant.

19. (Previously presented) A hybrid riser configuration according to claim 13, wherein the riser configuration is protected by sacrificial anodes.

20. (Previously presented) A hybrid riser configuration according to claim 13, wherein during tow-out and installation, the guide conduits provide necessary buoyancy to make the riser configuration, except the base and buoyancy means, near neutrally buoyant.

21. (Currently amended) A method for installing a riser configuration having a submerged tower comprising a plurality of riser pipes substantially inserted in guide conduits and also having a buoyancy tank and gravity base connected by said riser pipes and guide conduits, comprising the steps of:

- fabricating a bundle of guide conduits and riser pipes on a roller bed or rail bed from which it can be launched,
- connecting the buoyancy tank and gravity base to opposite ends of said bundle,
- sealing at least a plurality of the guide conduits and riser pipes of the bundle,
- launching the resultant structure and connecting the buoyancy tank and gravity base ends of the structure to respective towing vessels via towing wires,
- flooding the buoyancy tank to provide it with substantial negative buoyancy so that both the tank and the base will act as clump weights,

- towing the structure to the offshore location for its installation as a sub-surface tow while maintaining sufficient angle and tension in the towing wires to maintain substantial tension in the pipe bundle,
- lowering the base end of the structure by paying out the towing wire connected to the base,
- permitting water to enter the spaces formed between the riser pipes and their respective guide conduit when the base has reached a predetermined depth in order to limit the differential pressure across the wall of the guide conduits,
- continuing to lower[[ing]] the base end of the structure until the structure is perpendicular and suspended from the towing wire connected to the buoyancy tank, and
- lowering the structure to allow the base to penetrate the bottom mud-line and anchoring the base to the ocean floor, and removing the water ballast and towing wire from the buoyancy tank, thus providing tension in the guide conduits.

22. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 21, wherein a motion compensating system is employed in the towing wire between the buoyancy tank and surface vessel.

23. (Previously presented) A method according to clam 21, wherein the guide conduits are fabricated by welding together sections of aluminium pipe using friction stir welding.

24. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 21, wherein said guide conduits are made by joining sections of aluminium pipe which are made with a longitudinal seam welded by means of friction stir welding.

25. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 21, wherein at least some of the annular spaces between the riser pipers and the corresponding guide conduits are filled with a gel after expelling any water having entered said spaces during installation of the structure.

26. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 22, wherein the guide conduits are fabricated by welding together sections of aluminium pipe using friction stir welding.

27. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 22, wherein said guide conduits are made by joining sections of aluminium pipe which are made with a longitudinal seam welded by means of friction stir welding.

28. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 22, wherein at least some of the annular spaces between the riser pipes and the corresponding guide conduits are filled with a gel after expelling any water having entered said spaces during installation of the structure.

29. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 23, wherein said guide conduits are made by joining sections of aluminium pipe which are made with a longitudinal seam welded by means of friction stir welding.

30. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 23, wherein at least some of the annular spaces between the riser pipes and the corresponding guide conduits are filled with a gel after expelling any water having entered said spaces during installation of the structure.